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**Subject:** Establishment of Public and Public-School Libraries  
**Effective:** June 2003  
**Revised:** *January 2007*

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### 1.0 PURPOSE

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The purpose of this policy is to:

- define the process, procedures and standards for the establishment and partnership arrangements to ensure that **public** library services are established in the co-operative arrangement between the New Brunswick Public Library Service (NBPLS) and Local Government authorities;
- define the process, procedures and standards for the establishment and partnership arrangements to ensure that **public-school** library services are established in the co-operative arrangement for joint-use library services between the NBPLS, District Education Councils and Local Government authorities or French Community Centre Boards.

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### 2.0 APPLICATION

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This policy applies to the New Brunswick Public Library Service and its partners in the establishment of a public and a public-school library.

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### 3.0 DEFINITIONS

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**Public libraries** provide equitable and free-of-charge access to information, programs and services. The community and the Province work cooperatively to fulfill the library mandate.

**Public-school libraries** are libraries in which the public and the school population have equal priority access to library services and programs in the same premises, and for which the responsible parties work cooperatively to fulfill a joint mandate.

**Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)** is a statement of understanding and intent of the public/ public-school library partners. Although it does not create legal rights and obligations, it maximizes clarity of understanding by dispensing with the legal language of a formal agreement.

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#### 4.0 LEGAL AUTHORITY

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##### [NB Public Libraries Act](#)

The general responsibilities of the Minister are outlined under subsection 13(2)

A municipality or association of persons that receives the approval of the Minister under subsection (1) shall enter into an arrangement with the Minister with respect to the provision by the Minister of library services, including staff and materials...

The general responsibilities of a municipality are outlined under subsection 13(1):

*With the approval of the Minister, any municipality or association of persons, or combination of them, may establish, equip and maintain a public library as part of the provincial public library system.*

The duties of the public library board are specified under subsections 14(1), (2) & (3).

The roles and responsibilities of the public library board are set out in subsection 15(2).

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#### 5.0 GOALS / PRINCIPLES

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- 5.1 The mandate of the public library is to facilitate life-long learning for the public; and to provide services and resources to help meet their informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs.
- 5.2 The mandate of the public-school library is to facilitate life-long learning for both the public and the community school population; and to provide services and resources for both groups to help meet their informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs.

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#### 6.0 REQUIREMENTS / STANDARDS

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##### 6.1 CRITERIA FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW LIBRARIES

- 6.1.1 The establishment of a **public** library is appropriate where a community wishing to establish a library clearly demonstrates a long-term financial commitment in line with its partnership responsibilities; priorities could be established based on the following categories:
- a community with a population of 800 to 999 and at least 20 km from the nearest public library;
  - a community with a population of 1,000 to 2,999 and at least 10 km from the nearest public library;
  - a community with a population of over 3,000, regardless of distance from another site; or
  - a community that is geographically isolated from an existing library, e.g., an island.

**6.1.2** The establishment of a **public-school** library is appropriate only where financial, administrative and management co-operation among partners will enable substantially better library service to both groups of users, or at least an equal service with some cost savings. Other criteria that must be considered are:

- Although shared resources can result in cost savings, joint-use library services should not be provided on the sole grounds of purported cost savings.
- Public-school libraries should be considered only in communities of less than 1,000 people, and if the needs of the clientele from the community at large are fully met according to the standards applying to independent libraries. Other factors, such as an island location of the community to be served, should be taken into consideration.

## **6.2 STEPS IN ESTABLISHMENT**

**6.2.1** All parties interested in the establishment of a **public** library must follow the process outlined in Appendix A1 of this policy.

**6.2.2** All parties interested in the establishment of a **public-school** library must follow the process outlined in Appendix A2 of this policy.

## **6.3 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**6.3.1** The Memorandum of Understanding states the roles and responsibilities that each partner must fulfill in order that the mandate of the public library can be met. The signing of the memorandum indicates that each of the signatories has accepted the arrangements; understands the role and responsibilities of all parties involved; and intends to fulfill its responsibilities (see Appendix B1 of this policy).

**6.3.2** The Memorandum of Understanding states the roles and responsibilities that each partner must fulfill in order that the joint mandate of the public-school library can be met. The signing of the memorandum indicates that each of the signatories has accepted the arrangements; understands the role and responsibilities of all parties involved; and intends to fulfill its responsibilities (see Appendix B2 of this policy).

## **6.4 Facility Standards**

**6.4.1** The new public library facility should be constructed according to the standards listed in Appendix C1 of this policy.

**6.4.2** The newly constructed or renovated public-school library facility should be constructed or renovated according to the standards listed in Appendix C2 of this policy.

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## **7.0 GUIDELINES/RECOMMENDATIONS**

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**7.1** A feasibility study and a MOU template for the establishment of public and public-school libraries are available, through the NBPLS, to assist in the process.

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**7.2** Fact sheets are available, through the NBPLS, to assist all potential partners interested in establishing a public or public-school library.

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**8.0 REGIONAL GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES**

In consultation with the Provincial Office, Regional Directors may develop additional guidelines and procedures consistent with and necessary to support this policy.

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**9.0 REFERENCES**

Education Act. (<http://www.gnb.ca/0062/acts/acts-e.asp>).

New Brunswick Public Libraries Act. (<http://www.gnb.ca/0062/acts/acts-e.asp>).

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**10.0 CONTACTS FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

NBPLS Provincial Office, (506) 453-2354

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